

Was
Jesus
a False Messiah?



Was Jesus a False Messiah?

Or did Jesus preserve (netzer) the whole house of Israel?



The controversy between church and synagogue over whether or not Jesus is the true messiah has existed for the past 2,000 years. The conflict is based upon contradictory teachings; some claim that Jesus and the Christians (*notzrim*) will eventually destroy the Jews and their Torah. Supporters of this view maintain that Judaism and Christianity cannot peacefully co-exist. Others, including Israel's prophets, claim that Jesus is the messiah prophesied, and that the *notzrim*, or Christians, are destined to preserve the whole house of eternal Israel, including the 12 tribes of Jacob.

"Beth Notzrei Yisrael" (The School for the Preservation of Israel) has collected biblical evidence that Jesus and the Christians will preserve, rather than destroy, the twelve tribes of Israel. The school primarily bases its position on four prophecies—two predicting the coming of the Messiah of Israel; two predicting the coming of the Christians, or *notzrim*—and has prepared the following discussion in the hope that it will lead to further study of the prophecies in question. Readers are encouraged to read and interpret the passages in question "line by line, and principle by principle" (Isaiah 28:10).^{*} Only after comparing all available interpretations and evaluating their relative merits can a researcher of truth make a rational decision.

We must begin with a brief reference to ancient Israel's history. Israel became a nation composed of twelve tribes, named for their ancestor Jacob's twelve sons. After the conquest and the period of the Judges, Israel rejected the tribal theocracy and installed a king, Saul. Saul, David, and Solomon ruled over the twelve tribes as a United

^{*}All scripture references are taken from: *The Holy Scriptures*, Jewish Publication Society of America: Philadelphia.

Monarchy. The heavy taxation required to support Solomon's lavish lifestyle fomented rebellion, and ten tribes broke away to form the northern kingdom, which the prophets refer to as Israel, Ephraim, or "remnant of Jacob." The remaining two tribes became the southern kingdom, or Judah. Each kingdom had its own king and capital, and from then on the prophets refer to them as the two chosen families of Israel.

Asshur (the Assyrians) destroyed the northern kingdom near the end of the eighth century BCE. Since the Assyrians broke up families and scattered them throughout the empire as individuals, the ten tribes lost their cultural and tribal identity, and dropped out of sight. Some refer to them as 'the ten lost tribes.'

Babylon took Judah captive in the 6th century BCE. Unlike the Assyrians, who broke up family and tribal groups, the Babylonians settled the captives as a group in Babylon. We refer to this period as "the captivity." Eventually, in the middle of the 5th century BCE, Judah returned to her territory and rebuilt Jerusalem.

But what about Israel (or Ephraim/remnant of Jacob)? All the prophets predicted that they would be restored. This poses the questions of how, and when, this would occur. The same prophets also predicted the coming of a messianic person who would inaugurate this restoration. Who would he be?

Some of the key messianic statements are recorded in Isaiah chapters 7 to 10. Isaiah predicts the end of Aram and Asshur for having been Israel's enemies, because "all who curse God's chosen people will themselves be cursed" (Genesis 12:3). He then predicts that the northern ten tribes' state, Israel (or Ephraim), would be destroyed. Yet, in keeping with God's promises to all the patriarchs and matriarchs, a remnant of the kingdom would return upon this earth. Note Isaiah 10:21: "SHE'AR YASHUV," or, "*A remnant shall return: A remnant of Jacob shall return to God Almighty.*" Clearly, the ten tribes were not "lost" to God.

We now turn to two major prophecies predicting the coming of the Messiah. The first, found in Isaiah 11:1, tells us exactly how a remnant of Israel shall return. For the purposes of our discussion, the key word in this verse is *netzer*. From out of the stump of the cut-down tree of the Northern Kingdom "*a small shoot of Jesse*" is to start Ephraim's, or Israel's, rebirth. This shoot will *netzer* ("preserve" or "save") **all the twelve tribes of Israel**. To discover a proper translation of *netzer*, we go to the *English-Hebrew Dictionary*, published by Dvir Publishing Co. of Tel Aviv, Israel, edited by Israel Efros, Ph.D., Judah Ibn Shmuel

Kaufman, Ph.D.; and Benjamin Silk, B.C.L. When we examine the *shoresh* (or "root letters") of *netzer*—"n" נ (*nun*), "tz" צ (*tzadi*), and "r" ר (*resh*) in the traditional way, we find that the same three root letters are found in all Hebrew words identifying Jesus and the Christians. Note the following definitions:

Translating from English to Hebrew:

Christ	= <i>hanotzri</i> , or <i>Yeshu hanotzri</i>
Christiandom	= <i>medinot hanotzrim</i> , or <i>ha'olam hanotzri</i>
Christian	= <i>notzri</i>
Christianity	= <i>natzrut</i> , or <i>TORAS YESHU HANOTZRI</i> (the torah of Jesus, the Christian)
Jesus	= <i>Yeshu hanotzri</i> (Jesus the Christian)

All Hebrew words identifying Jesus and the Christians contain the root letters of *nun*, *tzadi*, and *resh*—the root letters that we find in *netzer*. When we take the same three root letters and work the other way, translating from Hebrew to English, we arrive at the following definitions:

NATZAR	= to watch, to guard, to keep from danger, to preserve
NITZAR	= to be preserved
NITZER	= to convert to Christianity
HISNATZER	= to become a Christian
NOTZER	= a watchman
NOTZRI	= a Christian

Note the related definitions: Christian, preserver, watchman, guardian. The definitions express the essence of ideal Christianity. With these definitions in mind, let us now translate Isaiah 11:1 from Hebrew to English:

VEYATZA'	= "and there shall come forth
CHOTER	= a branch (or 'twig', or 'shoot')
MEGAZA'	= from the trunk (or 'stump')
YESHI	= of Jesse
V' NETZER	= and will christianize (or 'preserve')
MESHARASHUV	= from its roots (or 'source' or 'origin')
YIFREH	= it shall bring forth fruit ('to blossom', 'bud', and 'come to fruition').

What is Isaiah predicting? That from the cut-down tree of the old Northern tribes of Israel (Ephraim), "a shoot from the trunk of Jesse"

would *netzer*, or preserve, or christianize, all twelve tribes, thus bringing Israel back to "completion" or "restoration" (*shalem*). From our study, we believe that the Jewish/Christian Messiah accomplished every dot and letter of this prophecy. How? It is a miracle only the "Lord of all Souls" (*Adon kul haneshamot*) could accomplish.

The second messianic prophecy, found in Isaiah 66:7,8, gives another important prediction about the first coming of the Messiah. Isaiah declares that the miracle would happen before "she" would go into labor, and before her pain (*chevel*) came, "she" would deliver a male child. With his birth a new nation or people would be born. Isaiah then poses some rhetorical questions: "*Whoever saw such a miracle?*" "*Is it possible for a new nation or country to be born in one day?*" In reply, he asserts, "*Yes, because it was planned that way prior to the creation of the world,*" and "*the mouth of the Lord has spoken it.*" (Isaiah 40:5, 55:9-11).

Note the exact wording of this prophecy:

"Before she travailed, she gave birth. Before her pain came to her, she delivered a man-child" (verse 7).

"Whoever heard of such a thing? Whoever saw anything like it? Can a nation [or country] be born in one day? Can a people be born in one moment [or "at once"]? For as soon as she travailed B'NAI TZION ["the Children of Zion"] were born" (verse 8).

All twelve tribes are also called *B'NAI TZION*, the Children of Zion. The logic is inescapable—to be the Messiah, Jesus would—at His birth—have to *re-establish all 12 tribes of Israel*, also called *B'NAI TZION* (the Children of Zion).

We now turn from the messianic prophecies to two major prophecies regarding the coming of the Christians (*notzrim*). The first is found in Jeremiah 31, where our Lord reveals to Jeremiah, clearly and distinctly, what will happen to the old ten northern tribes of Israel, or Ephraim. After researching this important chapter, we learn that the *new* Israel, as opposed to the old Israel, or Ephraim, will be called *NOTZRIM*, and/or *EPHRAIM*.

Rabbi Dr. H. Freedman, B.A. Ph. D., commenting in the Soncino commentary on the words, "*the people left of the sword*," asserts that the "people" are "... the survivors of the Northern kingdom. The use of this phrase discounts the interpretation that the prophet is alluding to the Exodus from Egypt." Biblical scholars generally agree that Jeremiah 31 predicts what will happen to the ten tribes of Northern Israel.

A literal translation of the passage in question reads thus:

- Verse 2 *"Thus said the Lord: The people left of the sword [which can only refer to ancient Ephraim] have found grace in the wilderness, to find their rest—even Israel" (of old).*
- Verse 3 *"From afar the Lord appeared to me [Jeremiah, and revealed to him] with everlasting love have I loved thee [Israel]. Therefore with affection have I given thee grace.*
- Verse 4 *"Again I will rebuild thee so that you shall be rebuilt, O virgin daughter of Israel." (Note that this is the same promise given in Isaiah 10:21-23.)*
- Verse 6 (Here note the name assigned to the rebuilt "*children left of the sword*".) *"For there shall come a day when notzrim [yes, notzrim] in the mountains of Ephraim shall declare 'arise and let us go up to Zion unto our Lord our God.'"*
- Verse 7 *"For thus said the Lord . . . the Lord has saved his people the remnant of Israel" (again, the exact words and promise of Isaiah 10:21).*
- Verses 8,9 [The "*people left of the sword*" will be brought back] *"from the uttermost parts of the earth . . . the blind, the lame, women and children . . . a great mass of them: to come by rivers . . . straight paths," etc. Carefully note the next words: "For I have always been a Father to Israel: and Ephraim is my firstborn [b'chor].*

What kind of a father would go back on his word and cause his "eldest son" to be removed from this earth? Should a researcher have missed the implications of the *notzrim* and/or Ephraim in the beginning of this study, the concept is repeated again in Jeremiah 31. *B'ramah*, or "*in the heavens above*," Rachel is weeping for her children, specifically Ephraim, because they cannot be found on the earth below. Therefore our Lord tells her to "*refrain from weeping and crying, for there is hope [tikvah] for thy future. For thy children shall return to their own former borders . . . Is not Ephraim a darling son unto me? . . . I earnestly remember him, therefore I will surely have compassion upon him, says the Lord . . . Let him [Ephraim] set his heart upon [our Lord's] highway . . . return O virgin of Israel. Return to these thine own cities"* (verses 15-20).

Toward the end of the chapter, in verses 31-34, comes the promise of a new covenant, or new testament, called **B'RIT CHADASHAH**, a promise to the new Israel and ancient Judah as the **one** united family of Israel: *"Behold, days are coming declares the Lord, that I will make a new covenant [B'RIT CHADASHAH] with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. I will put my Torah in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts. I will be their God and they [the two chosen families of Israel] will be my people"* (see also Ezekiel 37).

The second prophecy dealing with the *notzrim* (Christians, or restored Ephraim) and the last major passage in our discussion, is found in Micah 5. Micah prophesies that the "remnant" of the scattered people of old Israel (or Ephraim) would come back. When? With the miracle birth of a baby, born to Mary. Although at that point in time only Jews were visible as God's chosen people on earth, the ten northern tribes of Israel would be restored upon **B'NAI YISRAEL** (children of Israel). Ephraim was reborn from the cut-down tree of old Israel, on the day that Mary gave birth to her miracle baby. All this was foretold in the following passage:

Verse 1: *"And thou Bethlehem Ephratah"* [readers of the Soncino commentary and all Torah students will know that David came from a family of **Ephraimites** of Bethlehem of Judah (1 Samuel 17:12). Micah does not mention David or his house by name, but the allusion would be unmistakable to his listeners.] *"Out of thee will one come forth unto Me [God] who is to be ruler of Israel."* Thus the "He" who would eventually be ruler of Israel would come from **Judah and Ephraim**, as did David. *"And His coming was determined of old, from the ancient of days."* It was pre-planned before the creation of the world. *"Therefore He [the Father] will give Him [the "only son"—yihyad] up at the time that she who travailed brought forth her child."* Now note these key words:

V'YETER ECHAV = The residue, or the rest, of his brethren or tribes
YESHUVUN AL = will be restored upon
B'NAI YISRAEL = the children of Israel.

In other words, this verse promises that with the birth of this miracle baby:

- 1) the future king of the full House of Israel, consisting of Judah and Ephraim, would be born, and
- 2) the residue of the brethren, or tribes, would be restored *"upon the children of Israel."*

Verse 6 continues on to tell what the residue of the brothers (or *notzrim*) of Ephraim would accomplish: "*The remnant of Jacob would be spread amongst many nations: as dew from the Lord, as showers upon the grass. This [miracle] was not looked for from man nor awaited at the hands of the children of men.*" Or, man could not hope to accomplish the miracle; only through God's power could the prophecy be fulfilled. "Was it possible for any man—or all men together—to bring about the miracle birth of Jesus and the Christians?" the verse seems to ask. The rest of the chapter goes on to tell of other miracles that our Lord would perform for the "remnant of Israel," or Ephraim.

Reread these four prophecies and then decide for yourself: Were the ten tribes, or the "*children left of the sword*" to be restored as Israel, or not? With the coming of the *netzer*, or *hanotzri*, was not Israel restored to its full twelve tribes?

The above interpretation confirms two more prophecies, which we will briefly cite here. Both Amos 3:7 and Isaiah 44:7,8 predict that "*our Lord will never do a thing unless He first reveals his secrets to Israel through His servants the prophets*" (see also Deuteronomy 29:29). Thus, it is certain that neither Jesus nor the Christians (*notzrim*) could have appeared upon this earth unless their coming was first revealed through Israel's prophets of truth.

A REQUEST FOR YOU TO EXAMINE YOUR DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS

As a thinking person, how do you interpret and understand the prophecies discussed?

Isaiah 10:21: Do you believe that "*a remnant shall return: a remnant of Israel shall return to God Almighty?*"

Isaiah 11:1: How do you define the word *netzer*, and how do you interpret this text?

Isaiah 66:7, 8: Whom do you claim "she" was to be? Who is the one "*who in one day and at one instant brought forth a new nation or people?*"

Jeremiah 31:

1. Do you agree with Rabbi Freedman that this chapter deals with "the promised restoration of the northern kingdom?"
2. Were "*the people left of the sword—even Israel—to find grace and rest?*"
3. Were the "*people left of the sword*" to be rebuilt by our Lord, or not?

4. Whom were the *notzrim* in the mountains of Ephraim to be? Some have claimed they would be Jews. We say they are Christians. What do you understand?
5. Can we agree that God has always been a Father to Israel, and that Ephraim is His firstborn?
6. Does God promise Rachel that *"there is hope for her children to return to their own borders? Is not Ephraim a darling son to God? Will He not have compassion on the children left of the sword and restore them back to 'these thine own cities?'"*

Do you know (as those at Soncino Press) that Boaz, Jesse, and King David were Ephraimites and also Jews? To reside in Bethlehem, one had to be of both tribes. (Read the story of Ruth.)

Whom do you say is the "she" who travailed? Who is the child of this woman who, when He came upon this earth, would restore the residue of his brethren upon the children of Israel?

From our understanding of the above prophecies of Israel's prophets of truth, we believe that Jesus fulfills every letter and word, every requirement, to be the *Netzer*, or Preserver of Israel. He is the "one" who in "one day" brought forth the "*Notzrim*," or Christian people as the *restored kingdom of Ephraim, who found grace and rest from the Lord*. Thus, Jews and Christians are co-equal brothers and sisters of the eternal House of Israel. This is a central part of His Way, or Plan of Peace.

"Research our Lord and you shall find Him. Call upon Him, for he is always near" (Isaiah 55:6). From these words of wisdom, we Jews developed "houses of research" (*beth hamidrashim*) to understand the Creator/Director of the whole universe. In a "house of research" all sincere definitions and interpretations are given equal status. Students must seek other verses and quotes from Torah to verify their beliefs. This is how we arrived at the conclusions presented.

Furthermore, examine this controversy from a 'common sense' approach. The facts are that there are several million Christians, or *Notzrim*, on this earth. Is it not logical that the "founding Father" of the Christians preceded them? If the "founding Father" of the Christians came as prophesied, are not the *notzrim* the residue of the Messiah's brethren that were restored to the "children of Israel?" And therefore brethren of the "children of Judah (Jews)?" Christian and Jewish people should love and respect themselves--and each other. Remember the prophecy that *"the stick of Joseph (Ephraim) will eventually be united*

with the stick of Judah, in the hand of the son of David, the eternal messianic king" (see Ezekiel 37).

A practical application of our understanding of these prophecies implies that relationships among Jewish and Christian people should be harmonious. "*Justice, justice ye shall pursue if you are to live and inherit the promised land*" (Deuteronomy 16:20). Here are a few comments on the very serious problem of *sinas chinum*, or "hatred without a cause" of Jew against Jew. When a Jew practices unwarranted hatred toward another Jew, such injustice only hurts their eternal family. I refer to the character assassination of any Jew who believes that Jesus was the Messiah. Some have decreed that such "believers," or *ma'am-inim*, are no longer part of the Jewish family, nor can they remain in any synagogue. Do not think that *Mosheh Rabbenu* did not anticipate such inhumanity of a Jew against another Jew. In Deuteronomy 19:16 to 19, Moses requires that whenever two Israelites have a controversy "*they shall come before God, the priests, and the Judges.*" From this law, Jews developed the *beth din*, or the "House of Justice." Such courts of justice drew the admiration of Christian leaders during the dark ages. Today, before excommunicating Jewish "believers," the law demands that they be brought before a Court of Justice or *DIN TORAH*, where "*judges shall research diligently and see if the witnesses presented false evidence*" (verse 18). Some charges against believers may be based on false evidence (*aid sheker*), or incorrect ideas.

We plead to return to the early days of the Jewish *Notzrim*. "Believers" were allowed to sit side by side in the same synagogue with "non-believers." That is the human way (like *menschen*). Just as we hope for *sinas chinum* between Jew and Jew to disappear, so also we hope for *sinas chinum* between Christian and Jew to disappear.

Shalom will come to the whole earth once
people accept our Lord's way to peace.

*"For His ways are ways of joy, and all His
paths lead to peace"
(Proverbs 3:17)*

SHALOM

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Your written comments on this paper would be appreciated.